



## *Sugarbeet Plant Health at Harvest Can Identify Production Issues*

*Taking time at harvest to examine sugarbeet roots and leaves is a good way to get a handle on some growing season issues.*

Harvest is an excellent time to take inventory on some of the growing season issues that occur on an individual field basis. There is no better place than on the harvester to identify areas with poor yields, weak growth and/or off color. These areas should be noted so that soil samples can be taken if needed to determine the potential cause. Three common causes of poor growth areas are inadequate drainage, sugarbeet cyst nematodes and low PH (acid) soil conditions.

Healthy, disease free leaves are also important for maximizing quality and yield. If significant leaf spot is found, strategies for control need to be modified. Poor leaf spot control at the end of the season can be attributed to one or more of the following reasons; an extra *Cercospora* leaf spot spray was needed at the end of the season and/or spray intervals may also need to tighten. Stretching spray intervals to far will allow leaf spot to get started and will encourage fungicide resistance. Michigan State University Extension and REACH has encouraged growers to continue fungicide sprays until about September 15<sup>th</sup>. If strobilurins were utilized it may mean you have significant resistance to that class of fungicide. Another different mode of action should be considered for next year. Remember all fungicides classes should be rotated and tank mixed every time.

Each year Sugarbeet Advancement will harvest over twenty research trials and evaluate about 1000 beet samples for quality purposes. During trial harvest in 2013, it was very common to see beets being knocked out by the topper. On closer examination of roots, many of these had *Aphanomyces* issues but *Rhizoctonia* root rot was common as well. It was also common this year while digging samples to see significant root aphid and sugarbeet cyst nematode. Both of these pest are more apparent and damaging when droughty summers occur. Variety selection can help minimize the impact of both these pest.

### **REACH Research Contacts**

*Steve Poindexter, MSU Senior Extension Education, (989) 798-5848*

*Jim Stewart, MSC Director of Research, (989) 225-6720*

*Greg Clark, MSC Agronomist, (989) 891-6785*

*Lee Hubbell, MSC Research Agronomist, (989) 225-6708*

	<p><b>Research &amp; Education Advisory Council (REACH)</b> c/o MICHIGAN SUGAR COMPANY 2600 South Euclid Avenue Bay City, Michigan 48706 (989) 686-0161</p>
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